

Donald Morris/ an analysis

Your cover is showing; does it matter?

The use of official cover for intelligence officials presents a spectrum of problems. It is practically never used to "hide" anyone these days — from the press, perhaps, but not from each other.

If the United States, for example, posts a CIA official to Paris, his identity will be made known to the French service. The major reason he does not have a "CIA" sign on his door is to save the French government the embarrassment of having the left-wing Outs accuse the Ins of knowingly permitting a foreign intelligence official entry.

If a CIA official is posted to Moscow, we naturally do not tell the KGB. But the KGB has a pretty shrewd idea who the intelligence officers are, and besides, it treats all Americans as if they were CIA officials.

The KGB, of course, does not tell anyone who the KGB and GRU officials in their installations are, except those in local liaison slots in Soviet bloc countries. Almost all nations, however, are quite aware of who they are.

Soviet intelligence officials are relatively easy to spot, especially for professional KGB-watchers. By the time KGB officers have finished at least one tour abroad, the majority will have been identified, either by patient Rezidentura analysis or by overt action. Agents and defectors identify hundreds of others. Almost all Western nations request traces from the United States on Soviets being posted to their countries, and the United States obliges.

The point is that very few countries — the United States included — will automatically turn down a proposed Soviet posting just be-

cause the man has been identified as an intelligence official.

There are all sorts of reasons for this.

In America, neither the CIA — which supplies the bulk of the identifications, nor the FBI — which must cope with them after their arrival, likes the idea of admitting known KGB officers. But neither the CIA nor the FBI controls approval of such postings — the State Department does; and the State Department doesn't like to rock the boat.

(The FBI, which knows perfectly well that 50 percent of all Soviets are intelligence officials, can take comfort in the fact that admitting a known KGBnik at least saves them the trouble of having to identify him.)

Another problem is international organizations — IOs. Can the United States refuse to admit — or expel — a KGB officer posted to the U.N.? In practice, it has decided it can, if they have been active against American targets — it recently kicked a Vietnamese out and made it stick.

The Swiss have worse problems. The vast majority of the Soviet intelligence officers on Swiss soil are attached to IOs, which the KGB regards as a heaven-sent cover device. IOs will approve any posting, do not maintain sophisticated security shops (the Soviets would veto that idea), and IO officials need not know anything about their nominal cover job or devote much time to it either.

It therefore came as something of a surprise when the Swiss requested the International Labor Organization in Geneva to "terminate the contract" of one Gregory Miagkov, an alleged "railway expert" in the training department.

In June, two busloads of Swiss-based Soviets arrived at the French border for an out-

ing at Chamonix. In what should have been a routine crossing, a hitch appeared — the French detained Miagkov for questioning. The Soviets — "united we stand" types — refused to leave him behind, and four hours later all 80 were still waiting in their buses.

By evening, the buses had finally returned to Geneva, and Soviet officials from both Switzerland and France had arrived to try to spring Miagkov. The French finally turned him loose the next morning, but booted him back over the border.

Miagkov has been implicated in a number of major French espionage cases; he has been identified as a GRU colonel working on missiles and radar computers.

A recent defector to the British — Vladimir Rezin — identified 150 KGB and GRU officers on Swiss soil; the KGB Resident, Dmitri Pronski, has been back in Moscow for weeks while a major shakeup is underway with all manner of Soviet personnel changes.

The Soviets proposed one, Geli Dneprovsky, as head of the U.N. Personnel Office in Geneva. He was firmly identified as a senior KGB officer during a U.N. tour in New York. The Swiss have no control over the appointment — but could have refused him a visa. After stalling for weeks, they issued one, thus giving the KGB access to the personnel files of all U.N. officials and employees.

Thanks, we needed that.

The halcyon days of IO postings for the KGB will obviously continue.

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TO: Ms. Beverley Lumpkin
Subcommittee on International
Organizations
~~Committee on International Relations~~
3515 House Annex 2

Dear Beverley:

Attached is a Houston Post
article that Mo asked me to send
to you.

SIGNED

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Assistant Legislative Counsel